

P-1889

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
Office of Energy Projects
Division of Dam Safety and Inspections - New York Regional Office
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In reply refer to:
11-13 Power Street
Montague MA

October 3, 2013

Mr. Peter Champoux
19 James Street
Greenfield, MA 01301

Dear Mr. Champoux:

Our letter dated June 25, 2013 informed you that we are investigating your March 1, 2013 letter and your email of June 19, 2013 regarding your concern that canal water was seeping onto the 11-13 Power Street property. We visited the site on August 7, 2013, accompanied by three FirstLight personnel. Our investigation findings are presented below. Photos have been included for our reference.

We observed that all land abutting the power canal was dry. FirstLight mowed the land within their canal's ROW, which enabled a close visual inspection of the entire length of the canal wall including the ROW parallel to the property. There was dense vegetation around both buildings on the 11-15 Power Street property (Photo Nos. 5 and 6). However, we were unable to confirm the presence of wetland vegetation on your property.

At the paved parking lot, we observed a catch basin that connected underground drain pipes on the northwesterly side of the old Cotton Mill building. A review of the drawing, "Record Plan of Tile Drains near Mill of Griswoldville Mfg. Engineering Office, File No. 11347; Drg. No. H861", dated Nov. 26, 1924 (Figure 1) found that four drain pipes, three 6-inch and one 10-inch, outlet into Catch Basin #1 (covered with inlet grate). The outflow from Catch Basin #1 is through a 16-inch tile drain pipe that connects to two other catch basins (Catch Basin #2 & #3).

Seepage from these underground drain pipes was flowing out from the top of Catch Basin #1 (Photo No. 7) and over the paved parking lot. The surface drainage from the 11-15 Power Street parking lot area and any percolation or seepage from the old

Cotton Mill intake bulkhead flows through the pipes and empties into an existing 42-inch culvert that replaced the old Cotton Mill tailrace under Power Street (see Figure 1). The flows discharge into a swale on the FirstLight property between Power Street and the Connecticut River (Photo No. 10). FirstLight installed and monitors a weir (Photo Nos. 11-12) located downstream of the outflow of the 42-inch culvert to evaluate the rate of seepage.

You claimed that *"the flow of canal water is now in sufficient quantities to render a significant portion, if not all, of the parcel unsuitable for development. Indeed, there is a legitimate concern that the seepage is of such a permanent nature now that portions of the parcel could be deemed to be wetlands; thus, further eroding the parcel's development value"*. This cannot be substantiated. The drainage system shown on Figure 1, appears to be in need of maintenance.

We suggest that:

1. You or your successors should maintain or replace the 1924 underground drain pipes within the 11-15 Power Street property to allow seepage or percolation of canal water to drain freely through the underground drain pipes as stipulated in the 1952 indenture.
2. FirstLight should inspect the bulkhead to the old and abandoned Cotton Mill intake flume during their annual drawdown and make any repairs necessary.
3. FirstLight should continue to monitor the drainage weir installed on the swale downstream of the 42-inch culvert pipe outlet on a monthly basis and record flows. The monthly flow records will be submitted to us as part of FirstLight annual reporting to D2SI-NYRO.

Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. P. Emeruwa Anyanwu, Project Engineer, by email at pe.anyanwu@ferc.gov or by phone at (212) 273-5932.

Sincerely,



Gerald L. Cross, P.E.
Regional Engineer

Cc:

Project Nos. P-1889-MA

3

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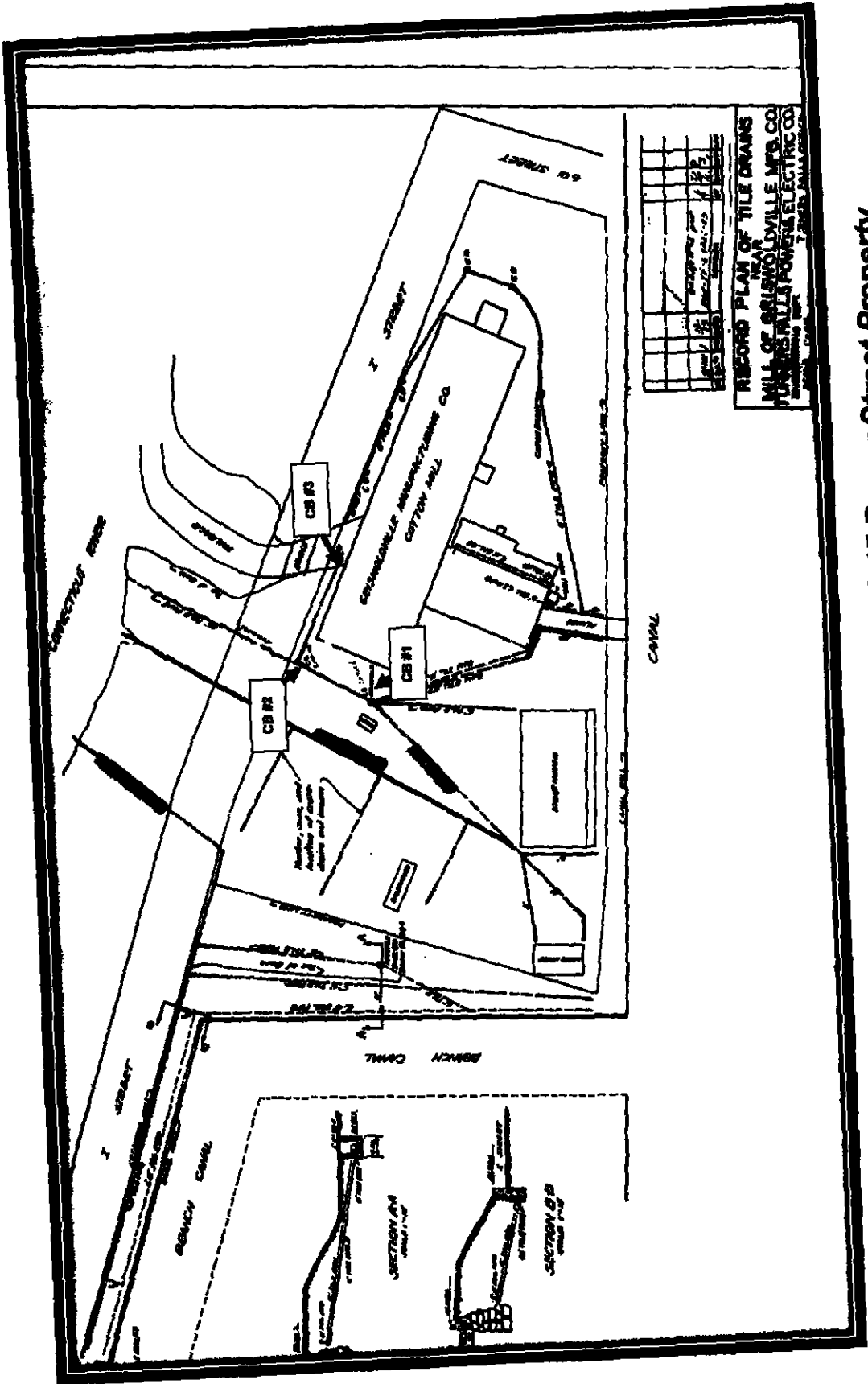


Figure 1 – Plan of Tile Drains at 11-15 Power Street Property
(Also, showing the catch basins (CB#1, #2 & #3))

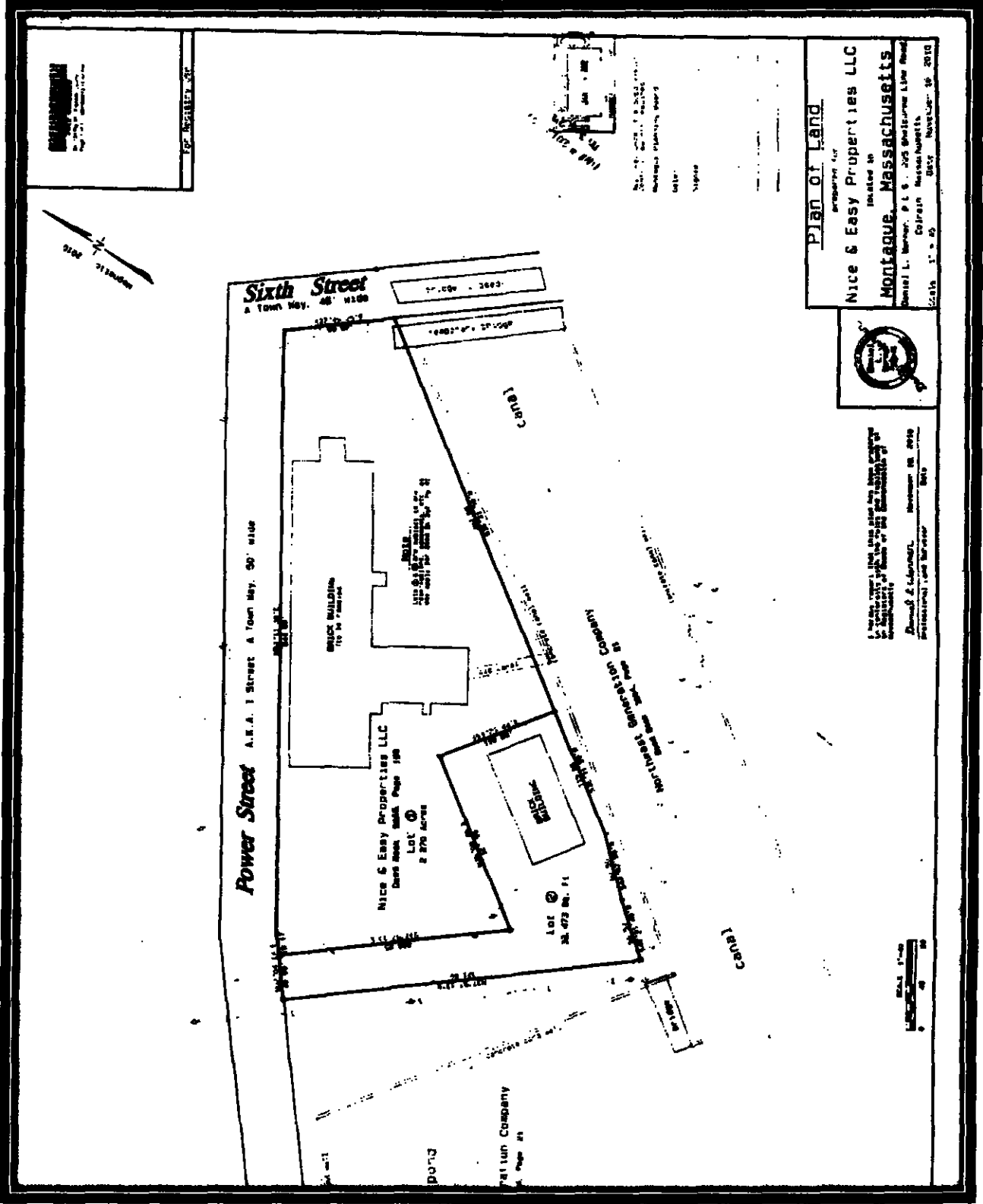


Figure 2 – Subdivision Plan for 11-15 Power Street Property



Photo No. 1 -- View of the power canal right of way and the old Mill Intake Flume



Photo No. 2 -- A close-up view of the sealed old Mill intake flume and ROW looking towards the No. 1 Powerhouse intake



Photo No. 3 – A view of the old Mill intake flume looking towards the abandoned Griswoldville Manufacturing Co. Cotton Mill building.

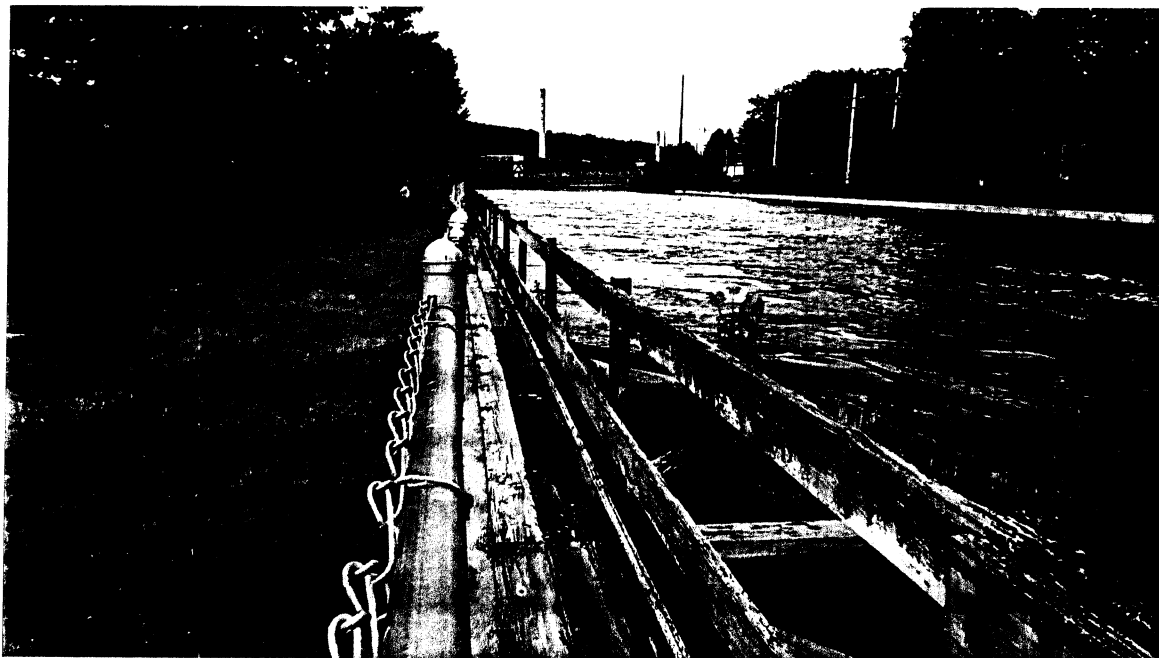


Photo No. 4 -- View of the Power Canal right-of-way looking from the No. 1 Powerhouse intake structure towards the 11- 15 Power Street property

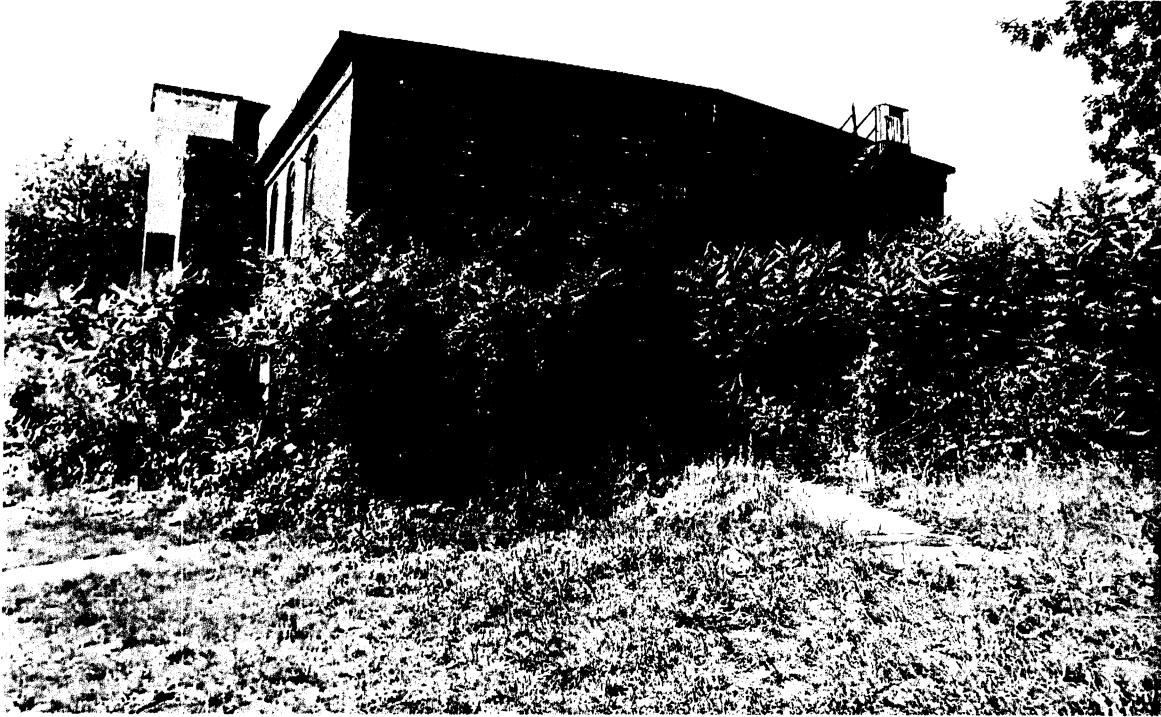


Photo No. 5 – A view of the “Store House” located in the rear of the Cotton Mill building. This lot has been recently subdivided and is now Lot 2 and has been sold separately.



Photo No. 6 – View of the grounds between the “Store House and the Old and abandoned Cotton Mill Building.

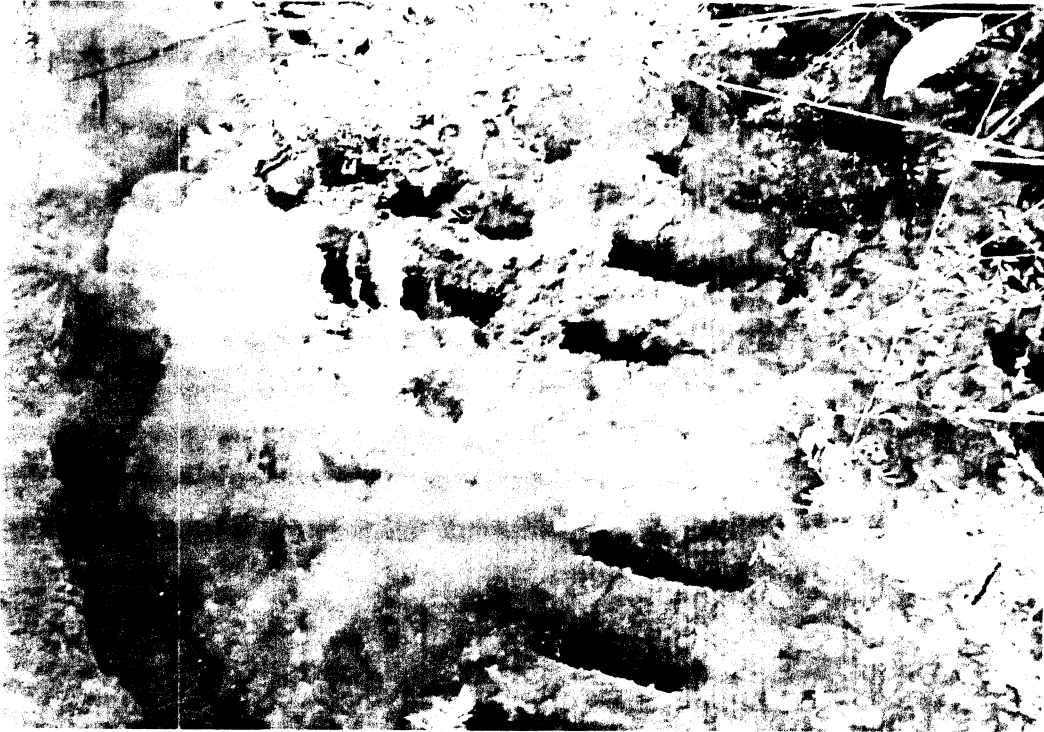


Photo No. 7 -- Close-up view of the source of seepage flows on the property. Flows were coming out from a drainage catch basin (see inlet grates), suggesting clogged drainage pipes.



Photo No.8 -- Vegetation around the seepage path from the catch basin towards Power Street



Photo No. 9 – The wet area of the parking lot looking towards Power Street



Photo No. 10 – Seepage from the 11 Power Street property flows through drainage pipes under Power Street to an open drainage path that finally discharges into the Connecticut River bypass



Photo No. 11 – FirstLight installed a weir on the outflow drainage channel to the Connecticut River to measure the seepage from 11 Power Street property



Photo No. 12 – Close-up view of the flow at the weir

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